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[Review of] Who Wrote That Song?

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1278. Jacobs, Dick. **Who Wrote That Song?** White Hall, Va., Betterway, 1988. 415p. illus. index. \$29.95; \$19.95pa. ML120.U5J23. 784.5'00973. LC 88-19351. ISBN 1-55870-108-7; 1-55870-100-1pa.

Jacobs, an arranger and conductor of popular music for the last 40 years, has brought together over 12,000 American popular song titles ranging from the 1850s through the 1980s. Arranged alphabetically, each song title listing includes the year the song was written; the composer, lyricist, and performer (or group); and who introduced it and popularized it. However, the entries do not include the albums on which the song appears—useful information included in the standard work *Popular Music*

(see ARBA 86, entry 1281), which covers the entire twentieth century and adds 500 new titles in annual supplements. Jacobs provides some cross-reference listings of songwriters although users must know variant forms; songs by Sting are listed under both Sting and Gordon Sumner with no cross-references. The index is of little use, listing the beginning and ending pages for each letter of the alphabet (e.g., *E* songs, pp. 64-68) and page numbers for short reminiscences by the author. *Popular Music* indexes albums, movies, musicals, television shows, and performers. Jacobs's coverage is extensive, but some basic titles are missing. John Prine's "Chinatown" is included, but not "Paradise"; Steven Stills's "Love the One You're With" is absent; and the only titles listing Joan Armatrading, Elvis Costello, and Stevie Nicks are "Your Letter," "Alison," and "I Can't Wait," respectively. A quiz (with answers); a list of Academy, Grammy, and Songwriters Awards; and a collection of photographs (mostly of the author) add little to the reference value of this work. Owners of *Popular Music* or Roger Lax and Frederick Smith's *The Great Song Thesaurus* (see ARBA 85, entry 1173), which covers over 11,000 titles with a year-by-year listing and access by medium of performance, subject, key lyric line, and composer, will gain little by adding this title. [R: Choice, Feb 89, p. 922; LJ, Jan 89, p. 79; RBB 1 Mar 89, pp. 1119-20]

—ROBERT AKEN